

THE SANCTUARY AT OL LENTILLE

Community

Our hosts here are the Laikipiak Maasai of Kijabe Group Ranch. In Kenya, a Group Ranch is owned in common by its members. There are some 250 members of this Ranch, of whom about one third are resident here. The Ranch population is about 800 people with about 2000 Kijabe people live elsewhere in Kenya. Approximately 100 Kijabe residents have been employed in the construction of the Sanctuary.

Our neighbours are other Maasai ranchers, and to our north Samburu tribesmen.



Livelihoods

The people of Kijabe still overwhelmingly pursue their age-old pastoralist way of life. They are cattle-herders, and keepers of goats and sheep. Increasingly they are able to combine their semi-nomadic existence to find dry-season grazing, with the technology of the twenty-first century, using mobile phones to buy and sell livestock at better market prices. Nevertheless, the colourful spectacle of the weekly livestock markets is still vibrantly alive.



The women of the Ranch are developing small craft businesses and Regenesis are helping them with accessing training and in selling their products in international markets, adding much needed cash to the family income. They have also opened a Maasai Craft Village or "manyatta". The manyatta will serve to preserve traditions, and to educate both the new generation and those of our guests who may be interested in a visit. You will be warmly welcomed.

When the Ranch set aside its conservation area, it also zoned the remainder of the Ranch into grazing areas and settlement areas. It has now embarked upon an enlightened process of re-zoning with the intention of further concentrating settlement to free up more grazing lands, over which it is implementing a pattern of seasonal grazing rotation. At the same time the Ranch is undertaking a radical de-stocking of livestock, cutting by two thirds the numbers of cattle, sheep and goats on the land. Simultaneously, they will start a programme of livestock improvement, bringing into the herd two proven Boran breeding bulls. The results are likely to be quite remarkable

both in economic development and in conservation terms. We look forward to keeping you updated on the progress of this exciting development in the months and years to come.

In July 2005 the Ranch entered into a 25 year Agreement with Regenesys Ltd to manage its tourism business and its Conservancy. Fees are payable to the Ranch under this agreement and since January 2006 the Ranch has been receiving income from this commercial enterprise. Before the advent of The Sanctuary at Ol Lentille, the average income at Kijabe was probably less than US\$3.00 per day

Education

The Ranch has had a Nursery School, Ngabolo, for some fifteen years, attended by some thirty children aged 4 to 9, with one trained nursery teacher, paid by the parents and supplemented by Regenesys. In late 2006 the community managed to gain registration of Ngabolo as a Primary School and a Form One teacher is now being employed by the ranch, teaching approximately 40 new pupils, paid for with income received from Regenesys. A further two teachers are being sought. In this way Ngabolo will act as a feeder school for the main Kimanjo Primary School. Formerly, the walk to Kimanjo was too long for the younger pupils, as much as 10 kilometres, and often with the risk of encountering dangerous wild animals. Consequently their entry to school was often delayed.

Kimanjo Primary School, a rapidly expanding school with approximately 420 pupils is also supported by Kijabe Trust and its friends. The School has recently built two boarding houses for older pupils and is planning a building programme to cope with overcrowded classrooms.

In addition, Regenesys has helped the neighbouring Nkiloriti Ranch to build a small nursery school for young pupils living too far to reach Ngabolo School.

Kijabe parents are devoted to trying to ensure their children get at least a primary education. Still, finding the money for uniforms and books is a daily struggle.

The nearest secondary school is at Dol Dol, a distance of 35 kilometres. All secondary education in Kenya is fee-paying, costing approximately £200/\$400 per year. Boarding at Dol Dol is the only option.

Many families cannot afford this cost and so the Kijabe Trust is committed to assessing and assisting the most needy cases. In addition the Trust is also committed to increasing access to tertiary education. Excitingly, one girl, the first on the ranch, now has a bursary to complete a University degree.



Many individuals and schools abroad have already given assistance through educational equipment in addition to helping fund teachers salaries.

Healthcare



There is a dispensary at the village of Kimanjo that was closed for many years due to the difficulty of obtaining government funds for drugs and a nurse. Late in 2006 a nurse was appointed. We are working with the Clinic to improve the facilities, and to obtain funding which will eventually help the clinic to register as a VCT (Voluntary Counselling and Testing Centre) for HIV/AIDS as well as a vaccination centre for babies. At present families have to travel over 25km to the nearest vaccination clinic. A programme of HIV/AIDS awareness has been started, and we also support a Maasai youth group who promote awareness of the hazards of FGM (Female Genital Mutilation).

Organisation

The Group Ranch is a legal entity in Kenya. It has an elected Committee to manage Ranch affairs. There are sub-committees for Grazing and Conservation, and a growing Women's Group.

The Ranch adopted its first formal written Constitution in November 2006. And it is now developing a Community Investment Plan to guide decision-making and to provide for accountability and transparency on the use of the income from Regenesis and other community enterprises.

Three members of the Ranch are also nominated to be Trustees of The Kijabe Trust.

The Ranch Committee, the first to recognise their own limitations in an increasingly complex world, have expressed a desire to get some business and financial education. Regenesis will work with them to secure funding and expertise for such a programme.

Since early 2006 the many women's groups on the ranch have come together, developed a written constitution, appointing post holders and completed the complex process of opening different bank accounts to start up diverse economic projects including an organized bead making project, an egg project and the building of the craft manyatta.

Community Support

The African Wildlife Foundation (www.awf.org) has been at the centre of the Economic, Community, and Conservation Development endeavour at Kijabe. It has provided funding for tourism development, and more importantly has worked unstintingly to sensitize and support the community in its Conservation work. AWF continues to provide advice and services to all of us here.

The Kijabe Trust was set up by the community with support from AWF. The Trust manages the Ol Lentille Conservancy, attracts donor and social and conservation investor funds, and applies these funds for the benefit of the Community. The Ranch nominates three Trustees who, along with three nominees of Regenesis, a nominee of AWF, and the current Chairman, Hon. Mr. F.X. ole Kaparo (the

Speaker of the Kenyan National Assembly), make up the Board of Trustees. The Board appointed John Elias as the Director of the Trust in late 2005. The Trust is in the process of establishing The Kijabe UK Trust and The Kijabe Americas Trust.

As well as being an investor and an employer at Kijabe, Regenesis is also a donor to the Kijabe and neighbouring communities.

In December 2005 Regenesis was also successful in attracting for the Ranch one of the largest ever Grants from the EU's Tourism Trust Fund (www.ttfkenya.org) for the expansion and completion of the tourism project.

Kijabe also enjoys some financial assistance through the Naibunga Conservancy from the IBAR programme of the African Union using UN GEF funds.